

Punta de Mulas, in the ports of Sama, Naranjo, del Padre, and Nuevas Grandes. It is remarkable, that near the latter port, almost in the same meridian where, on the southern side of the island, are situated the shoals of Buena Esperanza and of Las doce Leguas, stretching as far as the island of Pinos, we find the commencement of the uninterrupted series of the cayos of the Old Channel, extending to the length of ninety-four leagues, from Nuevitas to Punta Icacos. The Old Channel is narrowest opposite to Cayo Cruz and Cayo Romano; its breadth is scarcely more than five or six leagues. On this point, too, the Great Bank of Bahama takes its greatest development. The Cayos nearest the island of Cuba, and those parts of the bank not covered with water (Long Island, Eleuthera) are, like Cuba, of a long and narrow shape. Were they only twenty or thirty feet higher, an island much larger than St. Domingo would appear at the surface of the ocean. The chain of breakers and cayos that bound the navigable part of the Old Channel towards the south, leave between the channel and the coast of Cuba small basins without breakers, which communicate with several ports having good anchorage, such as Guanaja, Moron, and Remedios.

Having passed through the Old Channel, or rather the Channel of San Nicolas, between Cruz del Padre and the bank of the Cayos de Sel, the lowest of which furnish springs of fresh water, we again find the coast, from Punta de Icacos to Cabañas, free from danger. It affords, in the interval, the anchorage of Matanzas, Puerto Escondido, the Havannah, and Muriel. Further on, westward of Bahia Honda, the possession of which might well tempt a maritime enemy of Spain, the chain of shoals recommences\* and extends without interruption as far as Cape San Antonio. From that cape to Punta de Piedras and Bahia de Cortez, the coast is almost precipitous, and does not afford soundings at any distance; but between Punta de Piedras and Cabo Cruz, almost the whole southern part of Cuba is surrounded with shoals of which the isle of Pinos is but a portion not covered with water. These shoals are distinguished on the west by the name of Gardens (Jardines y Jardinillos); and

\* They are here called Bajos de Santa Isabel y de los Colorados.